REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated December 27, 2006. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, favorable reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection set forth in the Office Action are respectfully requested.

Claims 9-11, 13-15, 34-42, and 54-57 are pending. Claims 52 and 53 have been canceled, without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter. Claims 9-11, 13-15 and 34-42 have been amended. Support for the claim changes can be found in the original disclosure, and therefore no new matter has been added. Claims 9, 13, 34 and 39 are in independent form.

Claims 9-11, 13-15, 34-42 and 52-57 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,034,970 (*Levac et al.*) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,925,595 (*Whitledge et al.*). Since Claims 52 and 53 have been canceled herein, the rejection of those claims is moot.

Without conceding the propriety of the rejection of the other claims, the independent claims have been amended. Applicants submit that the amended independent claims are allowable over the cited art, for at least the reasons set forth below.

Independent Claim 9 is directed to a server. The server includes a detection unit configured to detect a new text inserted in a web page, a deletion unit configured to delete one or more character strings from the new text, wherein the one or more character strings are registered in a user information file, a first conversion unit configured to convert the new text, from which the one or more character strings have been deleted by the deletion unit, into a phonetic character string, a second conversion unit configured to

convert the phonetic character string into synthetic speech, and a transmission unit configured to transmit the synthetic speech to a client if mode information registered in the user information file indicates a first mode, to transmit the phonetic character string to the client if the mode information indicates a second mode, and to transmit the new text, from which the one or more character strings have been deleted, to the client if the mode information indicates a third mode. Independent Claim 13 is a method claim corresponding to Claim 9 and recites similar subject matter.

Independent Claim 34 is directed to an information processing apparatus. The apparatus includes a reception unit configured to receive one of a new text inserted in a web page, a first phonetic character string that represents the new text and first synthetic speech that represents the new text from a server, wherein the new text does not include one or more character strings registered in a user information file, a first conversion unit configured to convert the new text into a second phonetic character string, a second conversion unit configured to convert one of the first and second phonetic character strings into second synthetic speech, and a speech output unit configured to output one of the first synthetic speech and the second synthetic speech. The server includes a transmission unit configured to transmit the first synthetic speech to the information processing apparatus if mode information registered in the user information file indicates a first mode, to transmit the first phonetic character string to the information processing apparatus if the mode information indicates a second mode, and to transmit the new text to the information processing apparatus if the mode information indicates a third mode. Independent Claim 39 is a method claim corresponding to Claim 34 and recites similar subject matter.

Levac et al. relates to an intelligent messaging system and method for

providing and updating a message using a communication device, such as a large character display. *Levac et al.* teaches conveying a message generated by one of a variety of message sources to designated message recipients, who receive communications via at least one of many types of communication devices, such as a character display, audio device, etc.

The Office Action alleges that column 7, lines 49-53, of *Levac et al.* teach converting a text into a phonetic character string. While this portion of *Levac et al.* mentions converting messages to protocols, such as are compatible with various devices including audio devices, neither this portion nor any other portion of *Levac et al.* is understood to teach or suggest converting text into a phonetic character string. *Levac et al.* is also not understood to teach or suggest converting a phonetic character string into synthetic speech. Finally, nothing in *Levac et al.* is understood to teach or suggest transmitting to a client (or information processing apparatus), according to mode information registered in a user information file, either (a) new text, from which one or more character strings registered in the user information file have been deleted, (b) a phonetic character string into which the new text, from which the character strings have been deleted, has been converted, or (c) synthetic speech, into which the phonetic character string has been converted.

The Office Action concedes that *Levac et al.* does not teach or suggest all of the elements of the deleting claimed in independent Claim 9 or 13 (as those claims stood prior to the instant Amendment). In view of the common subject matter of the deleting claimed in Claims 9 and 13 as those claims stood prior to the instant Amendment and as those claims stand in the instant Amendment, it is submitted that *Levac et al.* still does not

teach or suggest all of the elements of the deleting claimed in Claim 9 or 13 in the instant Amendment.

In sum, *Levac et al.* is not understood to teach or suggest at least the deletion unit, first conversion unit, second conversion unit, or transmission unit claimed in independent Claim 9, the corresponding elements of independent Claim 13, the first conversion unit, second conversion unit, or transmission unit claimed in independent Claim 34, or the corresponding elements of independent Claim 39.

Whitledge et al. relates to a method and system for content conversion of hypertext data using data mining. *Whitledge et al.* teaches selecting and extracting hypertext elements from the World Wide Web and converting them into a format suitable for display. *Whitledge et al.* is cited in the Office Action as teaching certain aspects of the deleting claimed in Applicants' independent claims as they stood prior to the instant Amendment. Applicants submit that *Whitledge et al.* does not remedy at least the above-discussed deficiencies of *Levac et al.* with respect to the first conversion unit, second conversion unit, or transmission unit claimed in independent Claim 9, the corresponding elements of independent Claim 13, the first conversion unit, second conversion unit, or transmission unit claimed in independent Claim 34, or the corresponding elements of independent Claim 39.

Since *Levac et al.* and *Whitledge et al.*, whether taken singly or in combination (even assuming, for the sake of argument, that such combination were permissible), do not teach or suggest all of the elements of any of Applicants' independent claims, those claims are believed allowable over those documents.

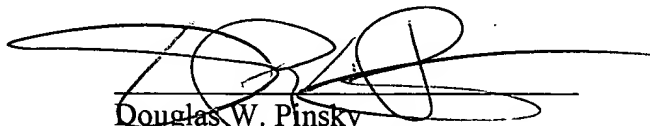A review of the other art of record has failed to reveal anything which, in

Applicants' opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as references against the independent claims herein. These claims are therefore believed patentable over the art of record.

The other claims in this application are each dependent from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed patentable for the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual reconsideration of the patentability of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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